

FITCHBURG PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paula Caron, Chair
John DiPasquale
Mike DiPietro
Paul Fontaine, Jr.
David Ogle (Associate Member)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Hurley
Nancy Maynard
Elizabeth Slattery

PLANNING OFFICE: David Streb
Mike O'Hara

Call to Order

Special Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Veteran's Room, First Floor, City Hall.

ANR plans

The Board reviewed the following "ANR" plan:

Benoit, 155 Airport Rd.

Slight revision of a plan endorsed 10-20-09. Lot B was enlarged to 10.0 acres in order to satisfy buyer. Board authorized Dave Streb to sign plan once discrepancy on lot lines has been cleared up w/ Bradford Engineering (one dimension was mislabeled).

The Board signed the following "ANR" plan:

Mass. Land Conservation Trust, Sheldon & West Streets

An 8,703 sq. ft. sliver of the 41 Sheldon Street "Gateway Park" parcel (on the opposite side of Nashua River) is being transferred to and incorporated into the 245 River Street LLC parcel.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Special Permit – Fitchburg Fire Dept. – wireless communications tower on Rollstone Hill

Voting members present: Caron, DiPietro, DiPasquale, Fontaine, Ogle (5)

(Associate Member Dave Ogle sat in for a missing member on this hearing.)

Action: Approved.

Capt. Brian Belliveau & Chief Kevin Roy, Fire Dept. presented plan for 140-foot high tower.

Brian: RF studies have shown the quarry to be the best location since it has a line of sight to all other FFD communications. Better to put up a new tower in a good location that replace a tower in a bad location (Flat Rock Road).

Tower won't be at very summit of Rollstone Hill (836' elevation) but at approx. 800' elevation, approximately 500 feet south of summit, toward Pratt Road side.

They have filed w/ FAA re: flight obstruction study.

Tower is planned to have whip antennas for Fitchburg Fire, Fitchburg Police, DPW, municipal use, MEMA & State Police. There will be leasable space room for up to three wireless carriers. Brian estimates revenue at \$60-\$90K per year.

Also room for microwave dishes which may be funded through an additional grant.

Grant money (\$182,000) to pay for tower expires 12/31/09. Must lock in permit by then.

Geotechnical studies done -- there have been three borings all within the proposed fenced-in area.
Awaiting results.

Q: How will electric, telephone service get to site?

Brian: heavy-duty armored cable underneath existing access road from Pratt Road.

Ms. Caron: There is an easement from Pratt Road to the site.

Brian: There will be an emergency generator for city equipment.

Fire Dept. will be closing down Flat Rock Road communications tower.

The tower must be 140 feet high. C. of F. will construct the 100' x100' concrete pad.

Access road from Pratt Road needs to be extended about 150-200 feet to site.

They will repair abutter's driveway (street address is #25 Wilson St.) if it is damaged due to construction of tower.

There will be a secure fence around the concrete pad. There may also be video camera within the fenced-in area w/ an alarm with a line of sight to Fire HQ.

Q: Will the tower be a potential conflict with the July 4th fireworks? Probably not.

Motion made & seconded to close hearing.

Vote 5-0 in favor.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. DiPasquale) to grant Special Permit with conditions:

- Special Permit is issued to the Applicant City of Fitchburg, acting through its Fire Department, and is not transferable.
- Construction shall be in general conformance with the submitted site plan titled: "Proposed Fire Tower on Rollstone Hill" prepared by Fitchburg Department of Public Works, Engineering Division, dated November 10, 2009,
- The tower shall not exceed 140 feet high and shall be located within a 100' x 100' fenced concrete pad.
- In order to provide flexibility for tower location due to site conditions, the exact location of the 100' x 100' tower enclosure may be up to 100 feet in any direction from the location shown on the above-noted plan.
- An annual inspection shall be made and reports provided to the Building Department, per Section 181.6238 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- This Special Permit shall allow the installation of Emergency Communications equipment (both on the tower and within the equipment shelter) for the use of Fitchburg Fire Department, Fitchburg Police Department, Fitchburg DPW, other City of Fitchburg communications facilities, Mass. State Police, or Mass. Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) without any further review or approval by the Planning Board.
- This Special Permit shall also allow the co-location of up to three private wireless communications carriers at approximately the 110-foot, 100-foot and 90-foot levels without any further review or approval by the Planning Board.
- The applicant shall meet any FAA requirements.

Vote 5-0 in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

Brief discussion on Brickyard Hill subdivision

Agreement between City (through Planning Board) and Travelers (bonding company) is all set. Travelers is finalizing paperwork with their completion contractor (P.W. Brown, Westboro) and will get started on completion of road & detention basin soon.

Photos of site taken that afternoon passed around. About 15 feet has been taken off top of hill; by next week 25 feet more will be taken. Loam being stockpiled. Sand being screened on site. Earth removal Special Permit hearing scheduled for December 15th.

Brief discussion on Clearwire wireless co-location, 609 Wanoosnoc Rd.

Board can hear the application at Dec. 15. Board can approve or deny or allow it to be withdrawn, but won't just continue hearing until Bay Communications matter has been resolved.

Board wants to seek \$300/day fine for violation of previous Special Permits for co-locating on tower. Ask Atty. John Barrett what are options. Is it within the Board's authority to fine? Can Board enter into agreement (like DEP does) to avoid going to court?

Bottom line: Board wants bridge fixed.

Board asked how many Special Permits have been issued for this location? How many bldg. permits? How many carriers are actually there? Information will be gathered prior to next Planning Board meeting.

Discussion to how to enforce conditions of Planning Board decisions.

Meeting adjourned 7:45 p.m.

Approved: 12-15-09